Then there is another issue that also comes to the floor. We had, this week, testimony from the Congressional Budget Office. The highway trust fund goes flat this summer. That means the Federal Government, beginning this summer, will make no new commitments to the States for repairing the 140,000 bridges on the national system that need repair or replacement, repairing or replacing the 40 percent of the national highway system that is in very sad repair, the $60 billion backlog in our transit.

Nope, we can't afford a penny of that. In fact, the Ryan budget says we are going to abandon—abandon—Federal investment in the national transportation system, and we are going to devolve it to the States. The States will fund, pay for, and somehow coordinate a national transportation system because we simply can't afford it.

Well, oddly enough, the shortfall in the trust fund is $16 billion a year. That is the exact cost of the R&D tax credits.

Why can't they wave their magic wand and say, well, hey, a million direct jobs and a couple million more indirect jobs in transportation, not only in construction, but in design, engineering, in manufacturing and research, we don't want to lose those?

We are not talking about maybe keeping or getting a few jobs. We are talking about losing well over a million direct jobs and a couple more million indirect jobs in the area of transportation, but their magic wand doesn't work for transportation.

Now, there could be a lot of cynical reasons for why they are just pushing this one R&D proposal. It probably doesn't have anything to do with campaign contributions or powerful interests that are out there. I am sure it doesn't.

One has got to wonder: Why is transportation—national transportation—old hat and unaffordable, but R&D, somehow wave the magic wand, and we can afford it?

Now, I was conflicted at coming here this morning because, at the same time, one of the greatest advocates that this body has ever had for national transportation, James L. Oberstar, died suddenly the other night.

I thought Jim would—rather than having me go up to his memorial service today, he would rather have me come to the floor and advocate for something he believed in and knew was essential for the future of this country, which is adequate investment in our system, a coordinated national system of transportation and infrastructure, an energy-efficient, 21st century system, and a repair to our 20th century system.

That is what we need. No more of these political shenanigans on the Republican side. Let's get serious about real investments and putting America bact to work.

□ 1030

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, so often folks will use this time in the morning to draw attention to failures or to divisions, but I want to use this time to draw attention to successes.

This is National Charter Schools Week, among other things, Mr. Speaker, and I happen to have two charter schools in my district. I represent only two counties, Mr. Speaker, Gwinnett County and Forsyth County, in the great State of Georgia. Both have outstanding public school systems.

And so often when we start talking about charter schools, Mr. Speaker, we talk about an either/or, as if somehow charter schools and public schools are in competition with one another, but that is not the story that I tell from the great State of Georgia. In fact, Gwinnett County, one of my two counties, won the Broad Prize in 2010 for the absolute finest urban education school district in the Nation. Interestingly, they are now reeligible to win that prize again this year after a 3-year waiting period. They are in the final two. Just amazing stories of young people and their successes. And they come through, among other things, two charter schools in my district.

We have the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, GSMST, Mr. Speaker. They don't have a football team. They have a robotics team, and an outstanding robotics team at that. If you want a future in the STEM fields, you can find no better education in the United States of America than the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, and it is free if you just happen to live in Gwinnett County. A wonderful story of success through the charter school program. Absolutely any student in the county is eligible. In fact, it takes a lottery to get in, Mr. Speaker, because so many young people, so many families want their children to be able to avail themselves of this charter school program.

The Washington Post called it the 17th most challenging high school in the land. U.S. News & World Report called it the third best high school in the land. I, of course, believe it is the number one best high school in the land, but an amazing testimony of what you can do when you free an institution, when you free the teachers, when you free the students to be the very best they can be.

Now, right next door, Mr. Speaker, to GSMST, the Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, we have the Maxwell High School of Technology. Now, the Maxwell School aims to take folks, these young people who are trying to find their way in life, and prepare them for a job tomorrow—program after program, Mr. Speaker, whether it is Web design, whether it is welding, architecture, technology field after technology field, not thought of theoretically, Mr. Speaker, but thought of from how can you graduate from high school and begin to provide for yourself and your family. That is not available in the normal public schools, but it is available at the Maxwell High School of Technology. And again, any student in Gwinnett County is welcome to come and be there.

Mr. Speaker, we still live in a land where there is more that unites us than divides us. We still live in a land that brings people together rather than tears people apart, and the charter school debate should be that debate. It should be the debate not that pits public schools against private schools; it should be the debate that brings us together around making sure that every young person in this land, every family in this land who has a dream of what they want to do with their life, that we have the public schools in this land that can help them fulfill that dream.

Mr. Speaker, we are doing that successfully in the Seventh District of Georgia, and I look forward to joining my colleagues in this Chamber to make sure we can do that successfully in every single congressional district in this land.

CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JOHN HOUBOLT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Houbolt, a native of Joliet, Illinois. He was one of the great unsung heroes of the Apollo program.

Politicians are fond of citing President Kennedy's famous speech made in this room at a joint session of Congress more than 50 years ago to ''commit this Nation, before this decade is out, to landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth.'' Politicians like to imagine that anything is possible if the right politician and speechwriter can muster just the right words to stir a country to action, but engineers know differently. If you do not have a workable engineering concept and a set of design parameters that respect both available resource limitations and engineering reality, then no amount of fine words from politicians is going to make any difference. Dr. John Houbolt provided that crucial engineering concept that made the 10-year success of the Apollo program possible.

John Houbolt came from humble beginnings, working 16 hours a day on his family's dairy farm near Joliet, Illinois, where he developed an early interest in aviation, building model airports in his free time. He graduated from Joliet Township High School and Joliet Junior College. He obtained a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Illinois in civil engineering. He then went on to obtain a